The famous and Memorable

HISTORY

OF THE

Battle on Chevy-Chace,

Between Earl PIERCY, with fifteen hundred English, and earl DOUGLAS, with two thouſand Scots; in which both theſe Earls, and moſt of their men were ſlain.

TO WHICH IS ADDED,

An old Ballad on the ſame Subject,

Embelliſhed with beautiful Engravings of the moſt remarkable Incidents in this important Hiſtory.

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BRITISH MUSEUM

THE

HISTORY

OF THE

Battle on Chevy-Chace.

CHAP. I.

How the Piercies got their name; and to be Earls of Northumberland; and of the vow which the Earl, in the Reign of Henry II. made to hunt on Chevy-Chace.

THE noble family of the Piercies, Earls of Northumberland, has always been highly eſteemed amongſt the Engliſh nobility; I might give a long account of the deſcent of that noble Earl who is a chief part of the ſubject of the following ſtory, but let this ſuffice, that he was grandſon to a valiant knight

who killed a king of Scotland, at the ſiege of Roxburgh Caſtle, by running a ſpear into his eye. For which ſervice his name was changed to Piercy or Pierce-eye.

The Earl, his grandſon, taking his progreſs, attended by 1500 ſtout archers, paſſing on to the marches of Scotland, he was informed that in the foreſt beyond the Tweed, called Chevy-chace, belonging to Earl Douglas, there was ſuch fine veniſon as was not to be equalled in the kingdom, and proviſions being ſcarce on the Engliſh ſide, the archers deſired leave to go out in parties, and bring away as much as they could undiſcovered; but he told them, if their courage was but ſufficient to venture for it fairly, he would go with them, and it ſhould be brought of with honour, as a lawful prize taken in an enemy's country. To this motion of the Earl's they all gave conſent, and he made a vow that for three days he would take his pleaſure in hunting on Chevy-chace; then he ſent for dogs and toils, and early on a midſummer-morning they all croſſed the Tweed. When they arrived at the place, the dogs were put in to rouſe the harts; but the hunts-

men's ſhouts and the ſound of their horns cauſed the villagers to think it was the voice of war on ſome ſudden invaſion, ſo that ſeveral hid themſelves, and many fled to alarm the country.

CHAP. II.

Of their killing many deers; and receiving a meſſage from Douglas at ſupper-time, commanding them to depart.

THE hearts and roes, tho' ſwift as the wind, could not outſtrip the Engliſh arrows, our archers laying hundreds of them dead, till they had got ſuch ſtore of veniſon that they doubted how to carry it off—yet having refreſhed themſelves, they found the quantity much leſſened.

While the Earl was at ſupper at a table made upon the graſs, and ſeated on turfs, when he was about to give orders to his huntſmen to purſue the ſame ſport the next morning, a meſſenger appeared in a ſcarlet livery. On which the Earl demanded from what place he came, and what his buſineſs

as? To which queſtions he moſt haughtily replied:

Sir, whatever you are, my maſter, the noble Earl Douglas, chief ranger to the king of Scotland, to whom all theſe parks and chaces belong, hearing you have preſumed to enter them and deſtroy his deer, by me tells you, that if you all do not ſuddenly depart, your lives ſhall pay for the injuries you have done, before to-morrow noon.

This being ſaid, he was about to depart; but Earl Piercy taking him by the ſleeve, ſaid, It is but right that you ſhould carry back an anſwer to your great lord.—Tell him that my name is Piercy, a name at which all Scotland has trembled; and that I purpoſe to take my pleaſure in theſe woods and chaces for two days longer; and if he is valiant, let him interrupt my ſport at the hazard of his life.

Upon this the meſſenger departed to go to the Scotch Earl, and relate what was given him in charge by Earl Piercy.—At which the Scotchman ſtormed and fretted, and walking up and down in great fury.

He enquired the number of the Engliſh, but the meſſenger could not give him a certain account, he only gueſſed there might be about ten or twelve hundred men. Whereupon he ordered his men, and his armour, which was guilted with gold, to be got ready againſt morning, alſo all his friends and ſervants, together with as many as made up full two thouſand men.

CHAP III.

Of Earl Piercy's second day's sport; and his conduct on hearing of Douglas's approach.

THE Earl of Northumberland relying on his men's courage, who were the beſt archers in England, was ſo far from being daunted that he ordered the tables to be ſpread again, and great ſtore of wine was drank to the proſperity of their ſport.

The ſun no ſooner gilded the horizon than the ſport was renewed, and the woods reſounded with the pleaſing noiſe. That morning they killed the moſt ſtately hart ever ſeen. Then the Earl turning to one of his knights, ſaid, The time draws near

when if Earl Douglas keeps his word, we ſhall have another kind of ſport therefore let us carefully keep our men together, for man to man, I fear not any nation under heaven; but, if I thought he would not come, we would remove to the next foreſt, for thither I perceive the deer have fled.

He had no ſooner uttered theſe words, than Witherington came up to him, ſaying, My Lord, cauſe the dogs to be called off, and muſter up your forces, for on the top of yonder hill I ſee Douglas coming towards you with upwards of 2000 ſpearmen. I thank thee, replied the Earl, and doubt not thy courage. Then

Witherington, bowing, ſaid, I do not doubt ſo to behave myſelf this day, as, with the reſt of your men, to be remembered in the moſt diſtant ages.

Immediately the horns ſounded a retreat, the dogs were called off, and the archers muſtered about their leader, who raiſed up their courage with the following oration.

My renowned countrymen, it was by your conſent that we paſſed over the Tweed for recreation, which is ſoon likely to be diſturbed ——Earl Douglas has ſent me a challenge; he is going to give us battle, or make us fly over the Tweed. Remember that you are Engliſhmen, and that Piercy is at your head. Be courageous; and, for the honour of our king and country gain ſuch a laſting fame, as ſhall not die but with time.

Having ſaid thus much, they all ſhouted, and immediately fell into order, ſome pruning their arrows, and others new ſtringing their bows, which were made of truſty ſteel.

CHAP. IV.

Of the meeting of the two Earls; their propoſal to decide the quarrel in ſingle combat; with Witherington's objection.

THE Engliſh archers were ſcarcely in readineſs when Earl Douglas appeared on the top of the hill, mounted on a milk-white ſteed, and his men ranged in order behind him.—Earl Piercy taking a ſtaff in his hand, and a ſword by his ſide, cauſed his men to move forward and to meet Earl Douglas, who being come within forty-paces, demanded whoſe men they were that durſt preſume to hunt in his foreſt, and to kill his deer; whoever they were they muſt expect to be ſeverely puniſhed; and commanded them to yield immediately if they expected mercy—The Engliſh Earl replied, It matters not whoſe men we are; but what we have done we will juſtify, and what deer we have killed we will carry away, or die upon the ſpot.

This ſpoken with ſuch courage made Douglas ſomething calmer—O, ſaid he, I know thee, Piercy, thou art an Earl as well as I; therefore if thou art as brave as fame reports thee, let thou and I decide it.

This offer pleaſed Piercy, who draw-

ing his ſword, bade defiance to the challenger, and they were going to engage, when Witherington thus addreſſed himſelf to Piercy: My lord, heaven forbid that I and the reſt of your ſervants ſhould ſtand idle while you are engaged; permit therefore, my good lord, that we all partake in this day's glory.

Hereupon the Engliſh ſhouted till the engagement became general.

CHAP. V.

Of the long continuance of the battle, and the death of both Earls.

THE Engliſh archers in the left diviſion immediately ſent a flight off

arrows, which laid ſixty of the Scots dead; and the right diviſion letting fly on the flank of their battalion, gauled them moſt miſerably. Earl Douglas ſeeing his men diſcouraged, ordered them to advance, and come to a cloſe fight, whereby he intended to make the Engliſh bows uſeleſs. But he was miſtaken, for whenever the front opened, the archers plied the Scots with their arrows, while the others kept them in play with their ſwords, inſomuch that the ground was covered with their dead bodies.

And Earl Piercy, accompanied by divers knights, broke in among them with ſuch fury, that he laid heaps of dead before him, ſo that Earl Douglas, who was fighting valiantly on the other ſide, was obligod to come and rally his broken forces. The two Earls met like enraged lions, no armour was proof againſt their well tempered ſwords. But at length Earl Douglas began to faint, when he thus beſpoke Earl Piercy, Noble Lord, you ſee your blood begins to flow faſt, and death you cannot eſcape if you contend with me any longer; I therefore would have you yield yourſelf my priſoner; you ſhall be nobly

uſed; and I'll prefer you to ſerve my king.—To This Piercy replied, As for my life take you no care, but rather guard your own; my honour I prefer before any thing, and it never ſhall be ſaid that Piercy yielded to a Scot.

Whilſt they pauſed a little, an arrow from the ranks of the Engliſh archers pierced the valiant Douglas to the heart, whoſe laſt words were theſe: Fight on, my merry men, revenge my death, for I am ſlain, And Lord Piercy lives to ſee my fall.

Earl Piercy mourned Earl Douglas's death, as one glorious hero ever mourns another. But while he ſtood near the body, Sir Hugh Montgomery, a valiant Scots knight, pierced him to the heart. Witherington perceived this, vowed revenge, and killed Montgomery with a broad-ſword. But himſelf did not long ſurvive, for a Scot, with an arrow, put an end to his life.

An excellent old Ballad describing the woeful Hunting on CHEVY-CHACE; and the bloody fight betweeen the Earls, Piercy and Douglas.

GOD prosper long our noble king,
Our lives and safeties all,
A woeful hunting once there did
In Chevy-chace befall.
To drive the deer with hound and horn,
Earl Piercy took his way;
The child may rue that is unborn
The hunting of that day.
The stout Earl of Northumberland
A vow to God did make.

His pleaſure in the Scottiſh woods
Three ſummer's days to take;
The chiefeſt harts in Chevy-chace
To kill and bear away;
The tidings to Earl Douglas came,
In Scotland where he lay;
Who ſent Earl Piercy preſent word
He would prevent his ſport:
The Engliſh Earl, not fearing this,
Did to the woods reſort.
With fifteen hundred bowmen bold,
All choſen men of might,
Who knew full well in time of need
To aim their ſhafts aright.
The greyhounds ſwiftly ran
To chace the fallow deer;
On monday they began to hunt,
When day-light did appear.
And long before high-noon they had
A hundred fat bucks ſlain,
They having din'd, the drovers went
To rouſe them up again,
The bowmen muſter'd on the hill,
Well able to endure;
Their backſides all, with ſpecial care,
That day were guarded ſure.
The hounds ran ſwiftly through the woods
The nimble deer to take:
And, with their cries, the hills and dales
An echo ſhrill did make.
Lord Piercy to the quarry went,
To view the tender deer;
Quoth he the Earl Douglas promiſed
This day to meet me here;
If that I thought he would not come,
No longer would I ſtay.

Then ſtept a brave young gentleman,
And to the Earl did ſay:
Lo! yonder doth Earl Douglas come,
His men of armour bright;
Full twenty hundred Scottiſh ſpears
All marching in our ſight.
All men of pleaſent Tiviotdale,
Faſt by the river Tweed.
Then ceaſe your ſport, Earl Piercy ſaid,
And take your bows with ſpeed.
And now with me, my countrymen,
Your courage forth advance,
For never was their champion yet,
In Scotland, or in France,
That ever did on horſeback come,
But if my hap it were,
I durſt encounter, man for man,
With him to break a ſpear.
Earl Douglas on a milk-white ſteed
Much like a baron bold,
Rode foremoſt of his company,
Whoſe armour ſhone like gold.
Shew me, ſaid he, whoſe men you be.
That hunt ſo boldly here;
And without my conſent, dare chaſe
And kill my fallow deer.
The firſt that did an anſwer make
Was noble Piercy, he
Did ſay, We liſt not to declare,
Or ſhew whoſe men we be.
Yet we ſpend our deareſt blood
The chiefeſt harts to ſlay;

Then Douglas ſwore a ſolemn oath,
And thus in rage did ſay:
Before I will out-braved be,
One of us two ſhall die;
I know thee well an Earl thou art,
Lord Piercy, ſo am I.
But truſt me, Piercy, I think it were,
A great offence to kill
Any of theſe our harmleſs men,
For they have done no ill:
Let thou and I the battle try,
And ſet our men aſide.
Accurſt be he, Lord Piercy ſaid,
By whom this is deny'd.
Then ſtept a gallant 'ſquire forth,
Witherington was his name,
Who ſaid, I would not have it told
To Henry, our king, for ſhame,
That e'er my captain fought on foot,
And I ſtood looking on;
You are two Earls, ſaid Witherington,
And I a 'ſquire alone;
I'll do the beſt that do I may,
While I have ſtrength to wield my ſword
I'll fight with heart and hand.
Our Engliſh archers bent their bows,
Their hearts were good and true;
At the firſt flight of arrows ſent
Full threeſcore Scots they ſlew.
To drive the deer with hound and horn,
Earl Douglas had the bent;
The captains, mov'd with muckle pride,
Their ſpears to ſhivers ſent.

They clos'd full faſt on every ſide,
No ſlackneſs there was found,
Whilſt many a gallant gentleman
Lay gaſping on the ground.
Oh, Chriſt! it was a grief to ſee,
And likewiſe for to hear,
The groans of men lying in their gore,
And ſcatter'd here and there.
At laſt theſe two great Earls did meet,
Like captains of great might,
Like lions mov'd, they laid on blows
And made a bloody fight.

They fought until they both did ſweat
With ſwords of temper'd ſteel;
Until the blood like drops of rain,
They trickling down did feel,
Yield thee, Earl Piercy, Douglas ſaid,
In faith I will thee bring;

Where thou ſhalt high advanced be,
By James, our Scottiſh king,
Thy ranſom I will freely give,
And thus report of thee
Thou art the moſt courageous knight,
That ever I did ſee.
To the Earl Douglas, Piercy ſaid,
Thy proffers I do ſcorn:
I will not yield to any Scot,
That ever yet was born.
With that there came an arrow keen,
Out of an Engliſh bow.
Which ſtruck Earl Douglas to the heart,
A deep and deadly blow,
Who never ſpoke more words than theſe,
Fight on, my merry men all;
For now my life is at an end,
Lord Piercy ſees my fall!
Then, leaving life, Earl Piercy took.
The dead man by the hand,
And ſaid, Earl Douglas, for thy ſake,
Would I had loſt my land.
O Chriſt! my very heart doth bleed
With ſorrow for thy ſake;
For ſure a more renowned knight
Miſchance did never take.
A knight amongſt the Scots there was
Who ſaw Earl Douglas die,
And ſtrait, in wrath, did vow revenge
Upon the Lord Piercy.
Sir Hugh Montgomery was he call'd,
Who with a ſpear moſt bright,
Well mounted on a gallant ſteed,
Rode fiercely through the fight.

He paſs'd our Engliſh archers all
Without either dread or fear,
And through Earl Piercy's body then
He thruſt his hateful ſpear.
With ſuch vehement force and might,
He did his body gore,
The ſpear went through the other ſide
A full cloth yard, and more.
So thus did both theſe nobles die,
Whoſe courage none could ſtain:
An Engliſh archer then preceiv'd
The noble Earl was ſlain.
He had a bow bent in his hand,
Made of a truſty yew;
An arrow of a cloth-yard long
Unto the head he drew.
Againſt Sir Hugh Montgomery
Aright his ſhaft he ſat;
The grey gooſe-wing, that was thereon,
In his heart's blood was wet.
This fight did laſt from break of day
Till ſetting of the ſun,
For when they rung the evening-bell
The battle ſcarce was done.
With the Earl Piercy there was ſlain
Sir John of Ogerton,
Sir Robert Ratcliff, and Sir John,
Sir James. that bold baron;
With good Sir John, and good Sir James,
Both knights of good account,
Good Sir Ralph Rabbin there was ſlain,
Whoſe proweſs did ſurmount.
For Witherington needs muſt I wail,
As one in doleful dumps.

For when his legs were ſmitten off,
He fought upon his ſtumps.
And, with Earl Douglas there was ſlain,
Sir Hugh Montgomery,
Sir Charles Currel that, from the field,
One foot would never flee.
Sir Charles Murrel, of Ratcliff, too,
His ſiſter's ſon was he:
Sir David Lamb; tho' ſo eſteem'd,
They ſaved could not be.
And the Lord Maxwell, he likewiſe,
Did with Earl Douglas die.
Of twenty hundred Scotiſh ſpears
Scarce fifty-five did flee:
Of fifteen hundred Engliſhmen
Went home but fifty-three;
The reſt were ſlain in Chevy-chace,
Under the green-wood tree.
Next day many widows came,
Their huſbands to bewail;
They waſh'd their wounds in briny tears,
Yet all would not prevail.
Their bodies, bath'd in purple gore,
With them they bore away,
And kiſs'd them dead, a thouſand times,
When they were cold as clay,
The news was brought to Edinburgh,
Where Scotland's king did reign,
That the Earl Douglas, ſuddenly,
Was with an arrow ſlain.
Oh, heavy news! king James did ſay,
Scotland can witneſs be,
I have not any captain more,
Of ſuch account as he.

Like tidings to king Henry came,
Within a little ſpace,
That Piercy of Northumbland,
Was ſlain in Chevy chace.
Then God be with him, ſaid our king,
Sith 'twill no better be.
I truſt I have within my realm,
Five hundred good as he.
Yet ſhall no Scot nor Scotland ſay,
But I will vengeance take,
And be revenged on them all,
For my Lord Piercy's ſake.
This vow the king full well preform'd
After, at Humbledown,
Were fifty Scottiſh Earls were ſlain,
With men of great renown:
And of the reſt of ſmall account,
Did many thouſands die;
Thus ended the hunting on Chevy-chace,
Made by Lord Piercy.
God ſave the king and bleſs the land,
In plenty joy and peace;
And grant henceforth, that foul debate,
'Twixt noblemen, may ceaſe.

20 JY 64

FINIS.